Risk of Indo-Pak War

2533. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item "Risk of Indo-Pak war highest since' 71:CIA" appearing in the Hindustan Times dated 8th February, 2002;

(b) if so, whether Government shares this perception of threat of a war;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to keep the country in state of defence preparedness; and

(d) whether Government will like to defuse the situation and if so, the details of the steps to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Government is aware of the news-item, which is an assessment of a foreign intelligence agency.

To Meet any threat that may emerge, the Armed forces of India stand fully mobilised in a defensive posture, to counter infiltration into Indian territory and protect our borders.

(d) Government have, on numerous occasions, reiterated India's desire to establish peaceful, friendly and cooperative ties with Pakistan, and for this purpose expressed firm commitment to resuming the composite dialogue, but only when Pakistan ends its sponsorship of cross border terrorism and takes action on the list of 20 fugitives from law handed over to Pakistan on 31.12.2001.

International defence exhibition in New Delhi

†2534. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any international defence exhibition was recently organized for the South Asian countries in New Delhi;

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the names of the countries who participated in it and what are the equipments put on display by these countries in the said expo; and

(c) the details of the talks if any, held by our Government in connections with procurement of any equipments from any such country?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Second Land and Naval Systems Exhibition — DEFEXPO India 2002 — was held from 19th to 23rd February, 2002 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. This was an International Exhibition and was not confined to the Southern-Asian Countries. Companies from the following 19 countries (excluding India) participated :—

1. Belarus
2. Bulgaria
3. Czech Republic
4. France
5. Hungary
6. Italy
7. Israel
8. Khazakhastan
9. Poland
10. Russia
11. Singapore
12. Slovak Republic
13. Spain
14. South Africa
15. Sweden
16. Switzerland
17. United Kingdom
18. Ukraine
19. U.S.A.

2. The range of exhibits included models, photographs, slides of a large variety of land and naval systems including armoured vehicles, rockets, mortars, detection equipments, ships, sub-marines, rocket

launchers, electronic and communication systems, guided weapons systems, laser based devices, recovery vehicles, training simulators etc.

3. Although it was a land and naval systems exhibition, some of the companies also displayed their range of aircrafts and helicopters for military and civil applications and associated systems.

4. No negotiations for procurement of equipment were formally conducted during the Exhibition with the companies.

Skilled/unskilled employees in Jabalpur based factories

†2535. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees working in Jabalpur based ordnance factories and the percentage of skilled and unskilled employees in them;

(b) whether the ratio of skilled and unskilled employees is ideal for better production and if not, the measures being taken in this regard; and

(c) what are the reasons for not utilising the technical trained youth there?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) There are 17,513 Industrial Employees in Jabalpur based ordnance factories namely Gun Carriage Factory, Vehicle Factory, Grey Iron Foundry and Ordnance Factory, Khamaria. The percentage of skilled and unskilled employees is 41.5% and 16.07% respectively.

(b) This percentage is considered adequate for meeting the existing workload in these factories.

(c) Induction in the ordnance factories is based on functional requirement of the posts in the factory. Whenever manpower is

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.